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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 1175  
INFO RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO PRIORITY 2752  
RHMFIS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 017674

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: MARR PREL MASS MOPS NL XL NT

SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF ANNUAL STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT  
(SOFA) FOR EXERCISES IN THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES AND ARUBA

REF: A. THE HAGUE 0094

1B. 07 THE HAGUE 1037

11. (U) Summary/Action Request: Department requests that post propose to the Netherlands Government (GONL) to extend the current bilateral SOFA through an exchange of diplomatic notes based on the text in paragraph 4 below, which is virtually identical to the text of the note currently in force (ref B). Department further requests that post propose dates, as described in paragraph 2, to the GONL for the first round of negotiations on a long-term SOFA. End Summary/Action Request.

12. (U) In response to ref A and the GONL's proposal to host the first round of negotiations on the long-term SOFA in Curacao in March, post is requested to propose the following dates: 12 to 13 March for the purpose of discussing the U.S. draft proposal and GONL counterproposal.

13. (SBU) In the interim, consistent with the Dutch suggestion in ref A, post is requested to propose to the GONL to extend the current bilateral SOFA through an exchange of diplomatic notes based on the text in paragraphs 4 and 5 below, which is virtually identical to the text of the note currently in force. United States military personnel are currently scheduled to participate in a marine unit exchange in June-July 2008 and the Deux Tricolores Exercise in October-November 2008, and other agreed activities, including scheduled port calls, that will take place in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba in 2008.

14. (U) Begin text of draft note:

(Complimentary Opening) and has the honor to refer to the agreement between the United States of America and the Kingdom of the Netherlands concerning the status of military and civilian personnel of the United States Department of Defense temporarily present in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba in connection with military exercises and training constituted by exchange of notes at The Hague on May 3, 2005 (the agreement), which would have terminated, in accordance with its terms, on May 3, 2006, and was extended twice for periods of an additional year, and which will terminate, in accordance with its terms, on May 3, 2008.

Desiring to continue military cooperation between our military forces in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, and in view of upcoming military training and exercises, in particular a marine unit exchange in June-July 2008 and the Deux Tricolores Exercise in October-November 2008, and any other agreed activities, including scheduled port calls. The Government of the United States that the agreement shall again be extended for an additional period of one year, so that the agreement will remain in force until May 3, 2009.

If the foregoing is acceptable to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Government of the United States proposes that this note, together with the response from the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, shall constitute an agreement between our two governments which shall enter into force on May 3, 2008, and shall remain in force until May 3, 2009.

End text.

¶5. (U) The reply of the Government of the Netherlands should read as follows:

Begin text:

(Complimentary Opening) and refers to the Embassy's note (number and date) which reads as follows: (quote U.S. note in its entirety). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the further honor to inform the Embassy of the United States of America that the proposals set forth in the Embassy's note are acceptable to the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and to confirm that the Embassy's note and this note shall constitute an agreement between the two governments, which shall enter into force on May 3, 2008.

End text.

¶6. (U) Any host country proposals for changes to the U.S. text of the diplomatic note should be referred to the

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Department of State and Department of Defense. State contacts are EUR/WE Timothy L. Smith (202-647-6591) and L/PM Thomas Herold (202-647-7563). Defense contact is Walter Earle (703-697-3327).

¶7. (U) Upon conclusion of the exchange of notes, post should report the agreement by cable and send the original host country note to the Department: L/T, Room 5420 (Attn: Daphne Cook).

RICE